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800 industrial enterprises in the country, most of which had a local importance only. Great attention was paid to the cultivation of tea and citrus fruits. The tea plantations, almost non-existent before the First World War, covered 128,440 acres in 1947. Tea production increased from 264,556 pounds in 1913 to 118,814,635 pounds in 1940, and the entire Soviet Union is now drinking 'Georgian tea'. Georgia has become completely dependent on the Russian market for this new produce of her soil; an independent Georgian State would hardly be able to find alternative buyers for the quantity of tea which is being grown on Georgian territory on the basis of all-Union economic planning.

The same would most probably apply to Georgia's citrus fruits, for which Georgia has also a monopoly in the U.S.S.R. The Georgian citrus fruit plantations grew from 295 acres in 1913 to 24,700 acres in 1938, but an ambitious plan fixing the area of these plantations at 98,000 acres in 1944 has remained largely on paper. Such a sensational increase had been decreed by the Council of Peoples Commissars of the U.S.S.R. on April 25th, 1940, but even without the interruption of the war the fulfilment of these targets might have proved unattainable. After the war, the question of the Georgian citrus fruit plantations was reconsidered by the central Government. A new decree was enacted on February 15th, 1946, which fixed the revised target for 1950 at 72,600 acres only.

It was the Georgian Government which was entrusted with the unpopular task of prohibiting the Georgian collective farmers from planting the areas reserved for the new citrus plantations with anything but lemons, oranges and tangerines. The overall responsibility for the implementation of the decree on the development of Georgian citrus plantations was, however, divided between the all-Union Ministry for Technical Cultures and the Georgian Government.

The extension of tea and citrus fruit plantations in Georgia prevented any increase in the local wheat and maize production which would have corresponded to the 32 per cent augmentation of Georgia's population between 1926 and 1939. Even before the First World War Georgia was forced to import cereals in years of an average harvest. The agricultural policy which the Soviet régime had pursued in Georgia made things much worse. In 1950 Georgia had to import 75 per cent of its bread supply from other Soviet Republics. This state of affairs was bound to cause considerable dissatisfaction in the country and the Communist Party found itself compelled to change its agrarian policy. It introduced a special seven-year plan for Georgian agriculture with the aim of making the republic self-sufficient in cereals by 1957.

The economic assignments given to Georgia were not of such magnitude as to require any substantial manpower imports. On the contrary, the Georgians belong to those few peoples in the Soviet Union who should be able to cope with the tasks allotted to them by economic

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planning without much assistance from labour drawn from the outside. Nevertheless racial intermixture in general and the immigration of Russians in particular increased even in Georgia under the Soviet régime. In 1926 there had been but 3·4 per cent Russians in the country against 8·9 per cent in 1939. On the other hand the percentage of Georgians dropped between the 1926 and 1939 census from 71·5 per cent to 61·4 per cent.

Russian cultural influence in Georgia is, however, much stronger than the percentage of Russians in Georgia's population indicates. In 1947 there were 300 Russian secondary schools in Georgia out of 800 altogether. Kupradze, the Minister of Education of the Georgian S.S.R., himself admitted that more than half of the pupils in Russian schools were non-Russians.[26]

It must be noted in this connection that the standard of education in Georgia is higher than in any other Soviet Republic, including the R.S.F.S.R. Thus in 1939 Georgia had, for every 1,000 inhabitants, 113·4 persons with secondary education and 12·2 persons with higher education. In the Russian Federation, on the eve of the Second World War only 76·8 per 1,000 had secondary education and only 6·5 per 1,000 had higher education. Georgia has also introduced eleven-year secondary education instead of the ten-year school existing everywhere else in the Soviet Union. This comparatively high educational level, combined with a good knowledge of Russian, has enabled the Georgians to play a not unimportant part in the Soviet civil service and in the bureaucratic machinery of the party.

GREATER GEORGIA

During the war the Georgians made a greater contribution to the defence of the U.S.S.R. than most non-Russian peoples. They played an outstanding part in preventing the Germans from penetrating into Transcaucasia. Fighting mostly in separate Georgian regiments and under Georgian officers they held up the German advance at the state borders of Georgia. It was thus a legitimate symbolical recognition of the Georgian war effort that a Georgian sergeant was allowed to hoist the flag of victory over the Berlin Reichstag together with a Russian Red Army man.[27]

The Soviet Government had every interest in advertising the war effort of the Georgians, for Moscow wanted to tell the world that here was a small people who had fought Hitler most heroically. This people must be rewarded at the expense of a neighbour state which had been neutral throughout the war. In other words, Georgia was to be switched into the diplomatic offensive which the Soviet Government launched against Turkey immediately after the end of the Second World War.